

REMARKS

The Examiner has issued a requirement for restriction of claims according to the following groups of allegedly patentably distinct inventions:

- I. Figs. 1-6 [first embodiment]
- II. Fig. 7 [second embodiment]
- III. Fig. 8 [third embodiment]

In response to this restriction requirement, Applicants **elect Group I** with traverse. Applicants submit that at least **claims 1 and 7-15** are readable on Group I and, thus, are readable upon the elected invention.

Applicants respectfully traverse this restriction requirement because the Examiner has failed to provide reasons why there would be a serious burden on the Examiner if restriction is not required. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that no such serious burden would be placed on the Examiner by examining all presently pending claims.

Applicants further point out that elected claim 1 is generic to all groups of inventions, and that all of the nonelected claims depend from claim 1. Thus, upon indication that claim 1 is allowable, Applicants reserve the right to have the claims drawn to nonelected inventions rejoined and the restriction requirement withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding restriction requirement. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the presently pending claims are in condition for allowance, and request a Notice of Allowability be issued in the present application.

Application No. 09/882,028
Amendment dated July 11, 2006
Reply to Office Action of June 13, 2006

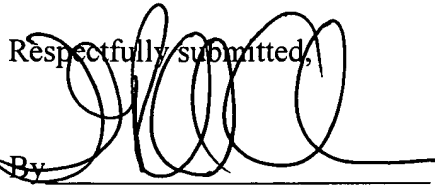
Docket No.: 2257-0188P


Should the Examiner believe that any outstanding matters remain in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Jason W. Rhodes (Reg. No. 47,305) at the telephone number of the undersigned to discuss the present application in an effort to expedite prosecution.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 11, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



By  D. Richard Anderson
Registration No.: 40,439
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant